



08.

LOOK TO
THE FUTURE



In its 50th year of service, WSF's vessels shuttle among 20 ports of call from Tacoma to Sidney, BC. Its 1,800 dedicated employees transport more than 26 million passengers each year. The system has been buffeted in recent years by the challenges of regional growth, technological change, and erratic tax revenues, but it has endured and remains an indispensable link in our state's transportation network.

Today Washington State faces critical decisions regarding WSF's future, for a stable source of funding is essential to WSF's continued operation. Looking back over the past 50 years, one sees that the ferry system has faced important crossroads before, such as when the State stepped in after private labor strikes halted ferry operations, resulting in the creation of WSF; or when the State veered away from plans to build three cross-Sound bridges. In retrospect, we look with gratitude to those decision makers who made the ferry system we have today possible. Fifty years hence, when WSF celebrates its 100th birthday, our children and grandchildren will reflect on this era of WSF's history and thank those who crafted a solution to the financial crisis WSF faces today. Finding that solution is the challenge of the 2001/03 biennium. 🚢



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